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Principal Heresies
RELATING TO
Our Lord's Incarnation
—
H. H. WYATT

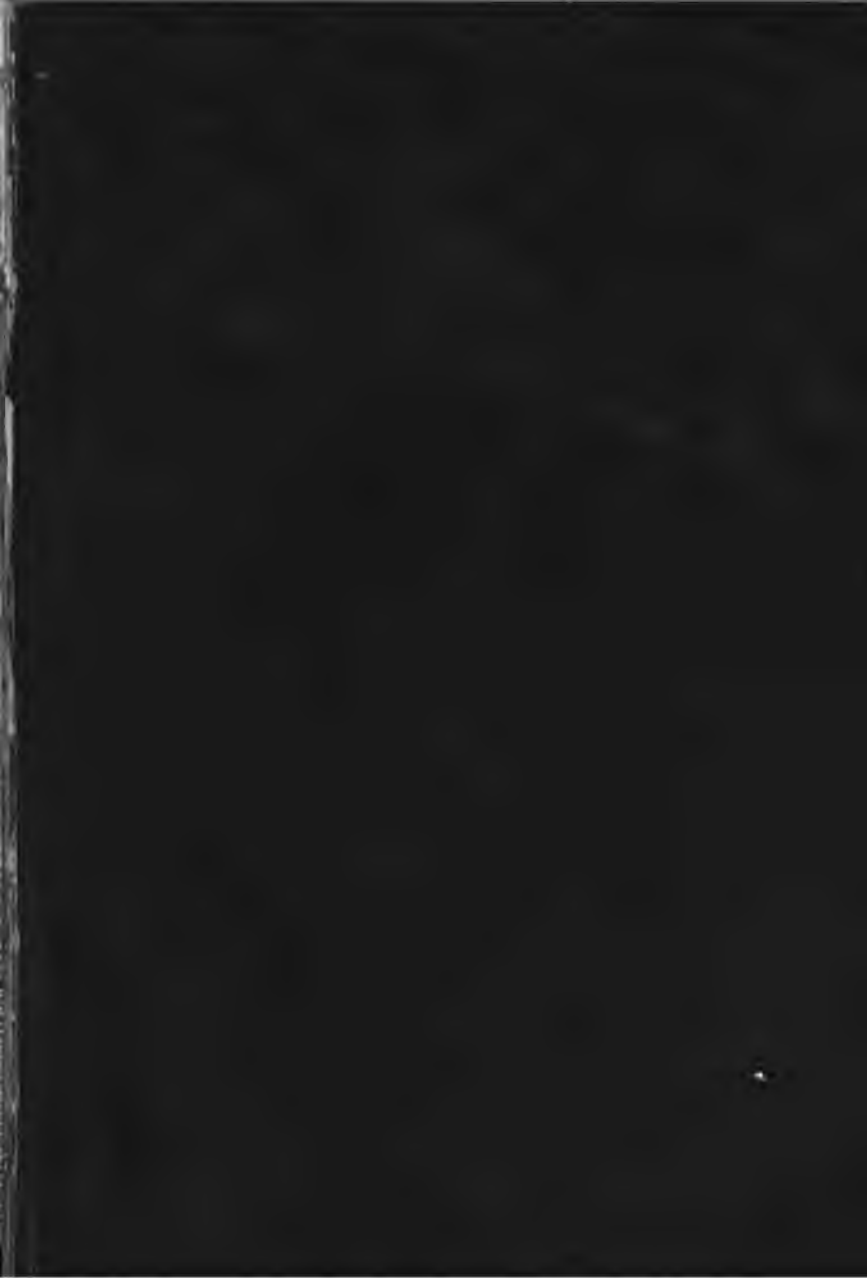
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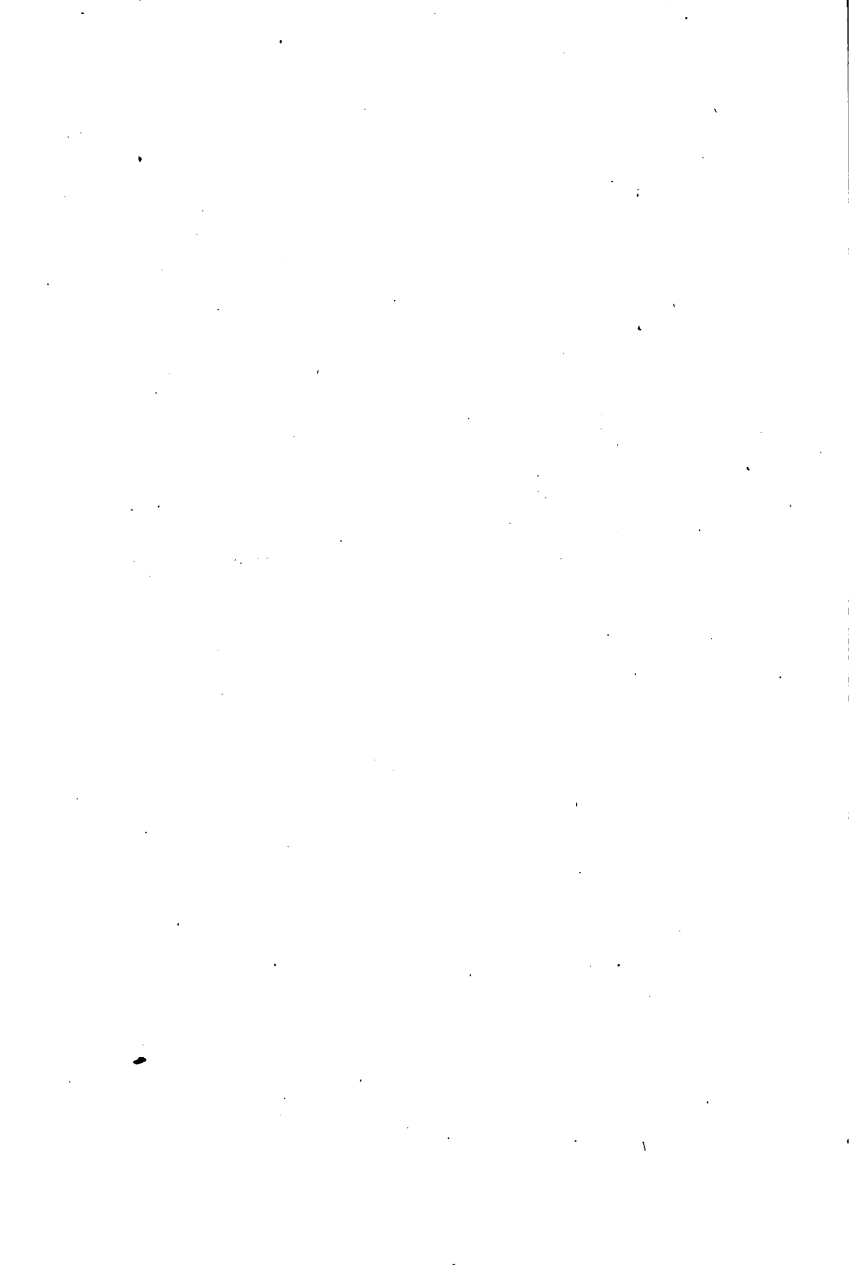
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THE
**Principal Heresies relating to
Our Lord's Incarnation**

A TREATISE

BY THE REV.

H. H. WYATT, M.A.

VICAR OF BOLNEY, SUSSEX,
AND

PRINCIPAL OF THE DIOCESAN TRAINING COLLEGE
FOR SCHOOLMISTRESSES, BRIGHTON

London
RIVINGTONS, WATERLOO PLACE

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PREFACE.

It may be that the following review of the principal heresies relating to our Lord's Incarnation will be found of use (amongst other readers) to Candidates for Holy Orders.

Only by distinguishing, and yet uniting, the records of Holy Scripture, will symmetry of faith be preserved.

Error has vitality belonging to it; and, though, multiform, often reproduces itself with no great variations.

So that there are modern misbeliefs concerning the Person of Christ not wholly unlike ancient errors.

The good Lord bless the present contribution towards maintaining an harmonious belief in relation to the manifestation of God in the flesh.



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CHAPTER I.

*Antecedent Probability of Heresies on the Incarnation—Fore-
notices of the Incarnation—Standard of Soundness in the
Faith—Notion proper of the Incarnation—Heresies, therefore,
on the Incarnation: (1) Gnosticism; (2) Apollinarianism;
(3) Nestorianism; (4) Eutychianism; (5) Monothelitism.*

HERESIES being among the *predicted* trials of the Church (for, it is written, "There must be also heresies among you" ¹), we are led to *expect* perversions of "the faith which was once (*once for all*) delivered to the Saints."²

But more particularly, when we reflect that the Person of Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone in the edifice of Christianity; that the Incarnation of the Eternal Word is the cardinal doctrine of the Christian system; and that its *denial* is one of the characteristics of Anti-Christ (for "every spirit that *confesseth not* that Jesus Christ is *come in the*

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 19.

² Jude 3. "τῇ ἁπαλὲς παραδοθείᾳ τοῖς ἁγίοις πίστει."

flesh is not of God; and *this is that spirit of Anti-Christ*, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even already is it in the world”¹), we see an antecedent probability of heresies on the *specific* doctrine of our Lord’s Incarnation. Moreover, what was the *object* of God manifesting Himself in the flesh? “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”² What wonder, then, that Satan³ should have expended so much of his subtlety in corrupting the right faith respecting the Person of that Son of God?

If, again, “it is necessary to everlasting salvation that we believe *rightly* the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ;”⁴ if the union of the two natures in the Person of our Lord may justly be considered as the source of every blessing we enjoy in time or hope to enjoy in eternity; if “the world’s salvation was without the Incarnation of the Son of God a thing impossible;”⁵ what wonder that the arch *enemy* of human souls should have chosen this blessed verity for an especial object of successive assaults?

¹ 1 John iv. 3.

² 1 John iii. 8.

³ “Concerning whose (sc. Christ’s) nature and substance, because divers and sundry heresies are risen, *through the motion and suggestion of Satan.*” Homilies, xii. p. 361. Ed. Oxford, 1844.

⁴ Athanasian Creed.

⁵ Hooker’s Works, v. 51. 3. Ed. Keble, Oxford, 1847.

Whilst, then, such are some grounds of antecedent *probability* of heresies on the particular doctrine of our Lord's Incarnation, the history of the Christian Church attests the *fact* that this actually *has* been an especial point of attack. "By the space of five hundred years after Christ," says Hooker, "the Church was almost troubled with *nothing else*, saving only with care and travail to preserve *this article* from the sinister construction of heretics."¹ And says another, "There seem *always* to have been heresies *about the Person of Christ*, because His Incarnation is something above our comprehension; and *had that been acknowledged, perhaps controversy and heresy might have ceased*; but it only occasioned new endeavours to solve and explain, and therefore new heresies."²

Now, before entering on the consideration of the doctrine of our Lord's Incarnation, a preliminary question may fitly be asked, viz., whether the great mystery of "God manifest in the flesh"³ is one for which man was in any manner or degree prepared? And from a review of *earlier* manifestations of Deity, it appears to have been the Divine intention to give mankind some *forenotices* of the Incarnation of the Eternal Son. Let us review some of

¹ Hooker's Works, v. 51. 3.

² Hey's Lectures. Appendix, 5. 31, vol. i. Ed. 1796.

³ 1 Tim. iii. 16.

these. First, in order of time, may we not suppose that the appearance of the Lord God to our first parents, when "they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day,"¹ was a visible manifestation of the Eternal Word in the figure of man? Of a *sensible* nature, again, was the Lord's manifestation of Himself to Abraham, when "the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him."² Again, that captain (margin, "prince") of the host of the Lord, who appeared to Joshua, and whom Joshua, falling on his face to the earth, worshipped, would seem to have been the Divine Son in human similitude; for "it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a *man* over against him with his sword drawn in his hand."³

We pass on to later times: a vision is granted to a prophet, wherein above the firmament was "the likeness of a throne, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a *man* above upon it."⁴

And yet another prophet testifies: "Behold there stood before me as the appearance of a *man*;"⁵ and in that vision, as Daniel "was by the side of the

¹ Gen. iii. 8.

² Gen. xviii. 1, 2.

³ Josh. v. 13.

⁴ Ezek. i. 26.

⁵ Dan. viii. 15.

great river which is Hiddekel, then he lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a certain *man* clothed in linen;” and again, “behold, one like the *similitude of the sons of men*” touched Daniel’s lips; and “there came and touched him one like the appearance of a *man*.”¹

Such are some of the passages where, it may be humbly supposed, the Word is revealing Himself in human similitude, prefiguring the future manifestation of Himself in the flesh. The precise nature of these earlier human appearances of the Word is not to be defined. The difference between these and the manifestation of the Word made flesh may have been that, under the old dispensation, the form only or figure of man was assumed, whilst in these last days the Son has appeared in the actual nature of man, like (if it may be so said) as the Evil One assumed the form or likeness of the serpent in the garden, without taking its very nature. Prospective references to our Lord Incarnate may, also, have been intended in the *bodily* terms found in Scripture concerning God. Doubtless these ways of speaking are in condescension to human faculties, which cannot now realize the notion of a Spirit, as God, without some kind of resemblance to objects of sense. But we may suppose that bodily members, as hands, eyes, ears,

¹ Dan. x. 4, 5, 16, 18.

ascribed to God are tacit allusions to the coming mystery of godliness, when, in the reality of manhood, the Divine Son became very Man.

In the order of inquiry respecting the doctrine of our Lord's Incarnation as distinguished from the principal heresies on that subject, the *standard* of soundness in the faith must first be agreed upon. To what is the *appeal* to be made in distinguishing heresy from truth? All religionists profess to make Holy Scripture the standard,¹ but as there are multitudinous and conflicting *interpretations* of Scripture, contrary conclusions have been drawn from the same professed premisses. So that an exposition of the *sense* of Scripture must be adopted, which shall be to us authoritative. The formularies of the Church of England shall be the standard of right belief concerning the Incarnation, and, more particularly, the Athanasian Creed, and the second, fifth, and fifteenth Articles.²

The next step will be to state and confine attention to the notion proper of the Incarnation. By this term, we understand the act in or by which

¹ Paley observes that our Scriptures were usually appealed to by both heretics and Catholics in the early controversies. "Evidences of Christianity," sect. vii. Ed. Cambridge, 1836.

² The "Doctrina and Politia Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ" (pub. London, 1617) mentions the heretics against whom they were made: Sabellians, Manicheans, Arians, Tritheists, Macedonians, Ebionites, Nestorians, Eutychians, etc.

the Son of God united to His Person the nature of man. Accordingly, the doctrine of our Lord's Incarnation does not lead us to consider Christ *only* in His Divine or only in His human nature, but as manifesting in His one undivided Person the *union* of these two natures. "When thou hearest of Christ," says S. Chrysostom, "think not of Him as God only or Man only, but as both together."¹ Whilst, however, our thoughts are not carried to *either* nature *separately*, yet to dwell on their *union* carries us *inclusively* to each; *i.e.*, we must steadfastly believe in the Godhead of Christ at the same time that we as steadfastly believe in His Manhood. So that the *union* of the Divine and human natures, or God becoming Man, in the one Person of His Son Jesus Christ, constitutes the verity known as the Incarnation. And this will warrant the statement, that *heresies* on our Lord's *Incarnation* are such as concern the *union* of natures in His Person.²

The following, therefore, are heresies on the subject:—

(1.) The *Gnostic* heresy, which affirmed the *union*

¹ S. Chrysostom, quoted by Beveridge, Art. ii. p. 96, vol. vii. Works, Oxford, 1845.

² Arianism is not strictly a heresy on the Incarnation. Hey thus distinguishes between the two: "Regular professed disputes about the *Consubstantiality* of the Son of God *with the Father* did rage till the time of *Arius*—and the different *solutions* of the *Incarnation*," etc. Hey's Lect., Appendix 5. 31, vol. i.

of natures to be mere *illusion*, for that Christ was not God manifest really in the flesh.

(2.) The *Apollinarian*, which impugned the *union* of two natures in our Lord's Person, by denying one of the constituents of one of the natures, viz., a *reasonable soul*.

(3.) The *Nestorian*, which, as touching the *union* of natures, maintained it to be effected in *two Persons*.

(4.) The *Eutychian*, which perverted the true doctrine respecting the *union*, by denying the *distinctness of natures*.

(5.) The *Monothelite* (rather, however, a form of Eutychianism than a separate heresy), which corrupted the right faith as to the *union* of natures by allowing only *one will* to be in Christ Incarnate.

CHAPTER II.

The Gnostic Heresy:*Christ denied Human Flesh.*

1. LET us consider the Gnostic heresy, as first in order of time,¹ and, it may be added, in importance;² for, if Christ did not in *reality* unite to Himself the nature of man; if His alleged manifestation in the flesh is to be resolved into an illusion; in a word, if His Incarnation never took place and be not a *fact*, what occasion is there for considering the various solutions of the *manner* in which it was accomplished?

All other heresies suppose and concede the *reality* of Christ's coming in the flesh, though perverting the right faith as to the *mode of its accomplishment*.

The Apollinarian believed the Word to have been

¹ "Christ, who is both God and Man, was *as soon denied to be Man as God*." Pearson on Creed, art. iii. vol. i. p. 200.

² Lord King speaks of "the Manichees and the like, who did blasphemously deny and ridicule this necessary and *fundamental point*, that Jesus Christ is manifest in *real and substantial flesh*." "History of Apostles' Creed," pp. 153, 166. Ed. London, 1703.

really made flesh, though he detracted from the perfection of the human nature assumed by our Lord, by disallowing Him a reasonable soul. And so in like manner, Nestorians, Eutychians, Monothelites, believed Christ verily Incarnate at the same time that their respective solutions of the mystery were heresies.

Whereas, then, the Church affirmed that the Son of God was truly Incarnate, taking man's nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, of her substance, and so became very Man, His manifestation as Man was, according to the Gnostic¹ heresy, illusory; He assumed, in Gnostic language, a corporeal appearance,² but not the real corporeal substance of a human body.

¹ Cave, naming the sixteen centuries, calls them: 1. Apostolicum, 2. Gnosticum, 3. Novatianum, 4. Arianum, 5. Nestorianum, 6. Eutychianum, 7. Monotheliticum, etc.

It seems best here to use the general name of Gnostics for all the various heretics, who denied the reality of our Lord's Manhood and sufferings; e.g., "Valentinians and Marcionites, and the other Gnostics." Mosheim Eccles. Hist., vol. i., cent. iii., chap. v. 1.

Lord King says, "The Gnostics were without doubt those ungodly spirits, who would not confess that Jesus Christ was *come in the flesh* . . . and they were crumbled amongst themselves into innumerable sects and divisions, yet universally agreed in denying the truth and reality of our Saviour's Body. "History of Apostles' Creed," p. 165.

² The expressions of the Gnostic heresy were various, but maintained in effect the same error, e.g., that Christ was "putative tantum hominem," "in phantasmate tantum venisse," "absque carne Christum in substantiâ corporis non fuisse, et phantasmate tantum passum fuisse." οὐκ ἐν σαρκί, ἀλλὰ δοκῇσι Χριστὸν πεφανερῶσθαι ὑπέλαβον.

He became visible to mortal eyes, not in the reality of human flesh, but in an aerial form or shadowy resemblance of a body. This extravagant figment subverts the whole Christian history, and, by consequence, the whole body of Christian doctrine.

For whereas the Gospel history is a narrative of the Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, as matters of fact, of a *Man*, "the Man Christ Jesus," the Gnostic, by denying the reality of His history as *Man*, denies the doctrines, which issue from the facts.

The right faith, as distinguished from the error that our Lord became *Man* in appearance only, is that He became really and truly *Man*; and if it can be shown that the Man Christ Jesus passed through each stage of human generation; exhibited each phase, each property, each infirmity of human life, and fulfilled the conditions of humanity in *death*, the truth of His *Manhood* is sufficiently established.

The first stage of human existence is conception; to this succeeds the nutrition of the foetus in the mother's womb; and, the period of gestation concluded, the act of parturition takes place, "a man is born into the world."

These successive conditions of humanity were experienced by Jesus Christ. He was really, though miraculously, conceived in the womb of His mother,

being "that which was conceived in her," and thus fulfilled the first condition of human existence, beginning in that act of conception to be Man. The embryo thus conceived was *nourished* in His mother's womb, for Mary was "great with child;"¹ and, the usual period of human gestation ended, when "the days were accomplished that she should be delivered,"² the birth of the God-Man ensued—"she *brought forth* her first-born Son."³ There was, then, a true conception, gestation, and parturition of man, the circumstances of His birth establishing the humanity of His generation, though not humanly generated. The Child thus born into the world was treated like the ordinary children of men: His mother "wrapped Him in swaddling clothes,"³ and, showing that His Body was a material substance, "laid Him in a manger."³ On the eighth day from His birth, "when eight days were accomplished,"⁴ the Son, whom it became "to fulfil all righteousness," shed *human blood* in the rite of circumcision, which the knife could not fetch from an empty form.

But thirty and three days elapse; on the fortieth day from His birth, another evidence of Christ's real manhood meets us in the Purification of His mother, and her Presentation of her "Man child;"

¹ Luke ii. 5.

² Luke ii. 6.

³ Luke ii. 7.

⁴ Luke ii. 21.

for, "when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord; as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every *male* that *openeth the womb* shall be called holy to the Lord."¹

Thus much of His human infancy.

Years roll on; and, like other infants, the "child Jesus" exhibited the ordinary human and physical development: "the child *grew*;"² and "Jesus increased in *stature*,"³ gradually progressing towards human maturity. The "Babe" became the "Child," and at length the "Man," as when Jesus "began to be about thirty years of age."⁴

Shall we say of Him all these years, It is a Spirit? Rather if the first Adam was *created* in maturity of body, and yet was very man, who shall resist the evidence of the Manhood of the Second Adam, born an Infant, growing as a Child, and after the gradual lapse of years slowly and visibly ripening into the prime of Manhood?

We follow our Incarnate Lord through the years of His public ministry.

The records of His life during those years testify to His real humanity; for if to exhibit the necessities, infirmities, passions of human nature demon-

¹ Luke ii. 22, 23.

³ Luke ii. 52.

² Luke ii. 40.

⁴ Luke iii. 23.

strate humanity, then truly was Christ very Man, "in all things made like unto His brethren."¹ Do men feel the necessities of *hunger*? So did Jesus; for "when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterwards an *hungred*;"² and, on another occasion, "in the morning as He returned into the city, He *hungered*."³

And the captious Jews, in their impious words, owned Him to be Man: "Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber."⁴ Do men feel *thirst*? Jesus, hanging on His cross, saith, "I *thirst*."⁵

Again, the *infirmities* of man were seen in Jesus, for He sat on Jacob's well, "being wearied with His journey;"⁶ and as other men *sleep*, so did Jesus, when "He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow."⁷

Human *passions* in Christ demonstrated that He was come in the flesh. His zeal in preserving His Father's House, from desecration: "the *zeal* of Thine House did eat me up;"⁸ His righteous anger, "when He had looked round about on them with *anger*, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts;"⁹ His pity, in shedding human *tears* over the devoted Jerusalem, as "when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it;"¹⁰ and

¹ Heb. ii. 17.

² Matt. iv. 2.

³ Matt. xxi. 18.

⁴ Matt. xi. 19.

⁵ John xix. 28.

⁶ John iv. 6.

⁷ Mark iv. 38.

⁸ John ii. 17.

⁹ Mark iii. 5.

¹⁰ Luke xix. 41.

again, at the raising of Lazarus, "Jesus *wept*."¹ Our Lord's generation, then, and His bodily growth, and the actions of His life, being strictly human, prove the Person so born and so living in the world to have been truly a human being.

But additional evidence of His Manhood is yielded by the circumstances of His Passion, Death, and Resurrection. Surely it must be very Man from whom *blood* comes forth, as when His "sweat was as it were great *drops of blood* falling down to the ground."² It could not have been a spectre, whose Person the rude hands of soldiers "*stripped and put on Him a scarlet robe*;"³ on whose *head* they put a crown of thorns; in whose *right hand* a reed;⁴ on whom they spit; on whose head they smote; nor could it be other than real Man on whose *shoulders* was placed the ponderous burden of a cross.⁵

Next, we turn to the circumstances which attended the *death* of Jesus. The ordinary *members* of the human body were possessed by Him; for the soldiers having broken "the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him—when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not *His legs*."⁶ And their next act shows the ordinary *organization* of a

¹ John xi. 35.² Luke xxii. 44.³ Matt. xxvii. 28.⁴ Matt. xxvii. 29, 30.⁵ Luke xxiii. 26.⁶ John xix. 32, 33.

human body, when "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced *His side*,¹ and forthwith there came thereout blood and water."

Was it a spectre, which Joseph of Arimathæa sought, when he "went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the *body* of Jesus;"² and which Pilate delivered to him, when "he gave the *body* to Joseph;" and when Nicodemus "brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight; and then took they the *body* of Jesus and *wound it* in linen clothes with the spices"³ Could this process of *embalming* have been performed on a shadow?

And was it only an aerial form which was "*laid in a sepulchre*,"⁴ and which was so anxiously observed by "the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, who followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and *how His body was laid*"?

Proceeding to the circumstances attending the Lord's *Resurrection*, we are supplied with further evidence of His humanity; for, after He rose from the dead, He gave proof of His possessing a real body, with its members and organs, when he said to His disciples, who "supposed that they had seen a spirit, Behold my *hands* and my *feet* . . . *handle me*, and see;

¹ Τὴν πλευράν, the pericardium. John xix. 3.

² Mark xv. 43, 45.

³ John xix. 39, 40.

⁴ Luke xxiii. 53, 55.

for a spirit hath not *flesh and bones*, as ye see me have. And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet."¹ And "the women (Mary Magdalene and the other Mary) who came to see the sepulchre," possessed and furnished proof of the reality of His body, for they "*held Him by the feet*;"² and the incredulous Thomas was invited to probe the Lord's bodily wounds: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and *thrust it into my side*."³

And that our Lord, *after* His resurrection, possessed bodily organs, we learn from the fact that Mary Magdalene recognized Him by His *voice*, when "she, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away (His bodily substance as an unquestioned reality being thus pointed out). Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto Him, *Rabboni*."⁴ And, lastly, Christ's very enemies are witnesses to the reality, as well as to the identity, of His body, for it was the same body which they sought to secure by "sealing the stone, and setting a watch"⁵ at the sepulchre, the departure of which they sought to account for by the

¹ Luke xxiv. 37, 39, 40.

² Matt. xxviii. 9.

³ John xx. 27.

⁴ John xx. 15.

⁵ Matt. xxviii. 66.

report that "His disciples came by night and stole Him away,"¹ while the guard slept. If, then, after His resurrection, our Blessed Lord possessed a real body, it follows that He possessed it before His death; for the notion of a *resurrection* is the *rising again* of the *same* body, and its reunion to the same soul from which it was separated by death. See "that it is *I Myself*."² But that body cannot be said to be *re-united*, which had *never* been *joined* to the soul; that body cannot be said to be *re-suscitated*, which *never existed*; that body cannot be said to *rise* from the grave which had never been *buried* there. Yet there *had* been, we have seen, the *burial* of a real body, and there followed, we have seen, the resurrection of a real body. It was therefore a real body which had *lived*, yea a Man, though God-Man, "which was from the beginning, which we have *heard*, which we have *seen* with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have *handled* of the Word of Life."³ Wherefore, with this accumulation of evidence, it cannot be doubted, that Christ took a true and real body, according to the statement, that "forasmuch as the children are partakers of *flesh and blood*, He also Himself likewise *took part of the same*."⁴

It may be asked, What need is there of a

¹ Matt. xxviii. 13.

² Luke xxiv. 39.

³ 1 John i. 1.

⁴ Heb. ii. 14.

lengthened refutation of the heresy, which denied the reality of our Lord's Manhood ?

This heresy involves fatal consequences. To deny the reality of Christ's Manhood is to deny the reality of those great *events* of the Christian history, on which the body of Christian theology rests. If our Lord was only Man in appearance, He only suffered death in appearance ; man's redemption, therefore, was not in reality achieved ; human guilt remains unexpiated ; God and man are still unreconciled. But as the atonement of Christ is revealed as an objective fact ; and as "without shedding of blood is no remission,"¹ the death of Christ must have been an objective reality. Again, Christ could only have died in His human nature, as Man (for the Divine Nature is impassible) ; and He must, therefore, have been really Man, to have really undergone death. So, too, His passion throughout has afforded proof of His being truly Man, His recorded sufferings being such as could not have been inflicted on an incorporeal spirit. Nor did His enemies, and the persons who imposed the sufferings, ever say that the subject of them was not a real Man ; nay, their sin was that they only regarded Him as a Man, "the carpenter's son."² Whilst, however, Christ's sufferings attest His humanity, proof of the latter has been derived

¹ Heb. ix. 22.

² Matt. xiii. 55.

from circumstances *prior* to His Passion, as from His generation, progressive development, actions, and infirmities. The reality, then, of our Lord's Manhood being established independently of His Passion, we may (without arguing in a circle) use the reality of His proved Manhood to prove the reality of His Passion, and, reciprocally, the circumstances of His Passion to confirm the truth of His Manhood.

The Gnostic heresy, however, not only denied the reality of our Lord's Death or Atonement, but also the reality of His Resurrection. For a really raised body implies a really dead body. But to deny the fact of Christ's Resurrection is to deny the fact, which is the chief proof of the truth of Christianity, and the foundation of the believer's hopes of immortality.

Jesus Christ, says S. Paul, was "*declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*"¹

* And, says the same apostle, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came

¹ Rom. i. 4.

death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."¹

Christ Himself referred the Jews to "the sign of the prophet Jonas"² as an evidence of His Divine mission; and it was His own assurance, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."³ The Resurrection of Christ is called in the Homilies "this most Christian Article, which is the ground and foundation of our whole religion." Such, ultimately, are the fatal consequences, which result from the denial of our Lord's humanity.

Others even remain behind. His Ascension is subverted; for our Church's doctrine is that "with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature . . . He ascended to Heaven."⁴ But how shall He who neither lived, nor died, nor rose from the grave, with a real body ascend to Heaven therewith?

And this leads to still further consequences. Without our Lord's Ascension, how should He have entered "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God *for us*,"⁵ and be at the right hand of God *making intercession* for us? How should believers expect their own ascension, if "the fore-runner is not for us entered thither, even Jesus"?⁶ If, again, Christ had not ascended up on high, the Holy Spirit had not been sent down to men; "for

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 17-21.

² Matt. xii. 39.

³ John ii. 19.

⁴ Article iv.

⁵ Heb. ix. 24.

⁶ Heb. vi. 20.

if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you.”¹ Finally, the denial of Christ’s real Manhood, contradicting the Scriptures as to His present session and dominion in Heaven as Man, clashes with the Scriptures respecting His re-appearance as Man; for how shall He *return* as Man, who did not at the first *come* as Man? Yet “this *same* Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven.”²

But if His departure from earth were not bodily and local, how shall His return to earth be “*in like manner?*”

It may, therefore, with truth be affirmed that this heresy subverts by consequence the entire Christian faith, and is repugnant to the whole Christian scheme from its opening to its consummation. Thus prolific in evil consequences is any one heresy.

It is, indeed, a remarkable instance of the extravagance into which the human mind can be betrayed, that a heresy which reduces the whole Christian history to one continued trope should ever have been conceived.³ There are amongst revealed

¹ John xvi. 7.

² Acts i. 11.

³ Woolston (Fellow of Sydney Coll., 1690) held that the Gospel is in no sort a literal story; the history of Jesus’ life being only an emblematical representation of His spiritual life in the souls

truths some, which the natural man feels more difficult of belief than others. But it is doing gratuitous violence to a history of facts to resolve it into fiction or allegory. Not a circumstance, with but few exceptions (and these capable of explanation), is recorded of our Incarnate Lord, which can reasonably create the idea of His being a spectre.

We possess as much evidence that Jesus Christ lived, as Man, a really human life on earth, as that any other human being ever lived, besides ourselves. Wherefore we believe and confess, great as is the mystery of godliness, that God was, most literally, manifest in the *flesh*, taking on Himself not the nature of angels, but the seed of the woman; and that with a real human Body, the Eternal Word was born, lived, suffered, died, rose, ascended, and now sits in Heaven, "whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things,"¹ when in the same human, though glorified, flesh He will return to judge mankind; for the Father "hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world by that *Man* whom He hath ordained."²

of men. It is not superfluous to enlarge upon our Lord's actual Manhood, and the literal reality of His human life. There are moderns, who regard it as one great *μῦθος*.

¹ Acts iii. 21.

² Acts xvii. 31.

CHAPTER III.

The Apollinarian Heresy:*Christ denied a Reasonable Soul.*

2. THE Apollinarian heresy is next to be considered.¹

Gnostics denied our Lord a human body; Apollinarians denied Him a human soul. By both, Christ's humanity is overthrown. For human nature is a compound of body and soul. If, therefore, Christ only assumed a human body, thus omitting one of the constituent elements of our nature, Christ assumed only our nature in part, or became but partial, instead of perfect, Man.

Nay, He would not have been Man at all, for the real man in each individual human being is the soul, which is the living agent.²

The Church's creed is, that our Lord became

¹ Its founder, Apollinarius, jun., was Bishop of Laodicea in Syria, circ., A.D., 370.

² Aristotle (Nic. Eth. x. 182.), speaking of νοῦς, says, "δόξεε δ' ἂν καὶ εἶναι ἕκαστος τοῦτο": and again (ix. 162., giving an etymological definition of the ἐγκρατής and ἀκρατής) "λέγεται τῷ κρατεῖν τὸν νοῦν ἢ μὴ, ὡς τοῦτο ἐκάστου ὄντος."

*"perfect Man of a reasonable soul, as well as human flesh, subsisting."*¹

But the Apollinarian heresy affirmed that His Divinity superseded, and took the place of, a human rational soul; that His Godhead performed the functions of the human mind, or intellectual principle in ordinary men.

Now, first, it is observable that the present heresy introduces a philosophy of its own; for whilst denying to our Lord as Man a rational, it allowed Him an animal soul.

But this, in effect, is to deny Him to be Man, for the creature which only possesses an animal soul is no more than a brute. The difference between the human and brute species resides, not in the possession by man of mind as a principle distinct from soul, but in the fact that the soul of the two species is of a different nature; the soul of brutes being only an animal or sensitive principle; the soul of man being an intellectual and immortal, as well as a sensitive principle.

The characteristic, then, which distinguishes man from other species of animals being the rational, as also sensitive, nature of his soul, as the additional quality with which it is endowed,—he who is man cannot but possess (from the received definition of man as a rational animal) a rational soul. To deny

¹ Athanasian Creed.

him this is to deny him to be man. If, therefore, we profess to allow our Lord to have become Man, we cannot say that He assumed only an animal soul, as He would not then be of the human species. So that it follows that, if He became Man, He assumed that kind of soul, which alone would make Him Man, viz., a soul of an intellectual, as well as animal nature. And thus, as the rational part of man in general cannot be considered as a distinct principle in his composition from his animal part, as if he were compounded of body, soul, and mind, but only as that quality or faculty of his soul, which constitutes him what He is, viz., Man, and not what He is not, viz., a brute, so neither can such distinction be made in the Person of Jesus Christ.

From these *a priori* arguments against Apollinarianism, we proceed to the *a posteriori* evidences that our Lord, in becoming Man, assumed *man's* soul, that is, a *rational* soul.

And, first, as Christ exhibited a physical, so did He also exhibit a mental development; for "Jesus increased in *wisdom*,"¹ and this being the express statement of Holy Scripture, it must not be evaded, in consequence of difficulties resulting from it. Now wisdom cannot reside in the flesh; nor could Christ *as God* increase in wisdom, for His Divine Wisdom is intrinsically perfect, and incapable of in-

¹ Luke ii. 52.

crease. He could only, therefore, increase in wisdom in that subject proper for it, viz., a human soul.

Nor need the Apollinarian find here greater difficulties than the Nestorian, with regard to the ascribing *human* actions and sufferings and feelings to *God*. There are analogies, which tend to lessen the difficulties of both. The Apollinarian held that, as Jesus Christ was God in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,"¹ God could not be said to be gradually increasing in wisdom; nor since Jesus is, as God, omniscient, would He need a human rational soul. But the principle of abstraction must be here applied.

Our Lord, though One Person, is to be viewed under two aspects, as Man and as God. By virtue of His Divine Nature, He would be Omniscient, needing neither the information of an internal, intellectual principle, nor external communications from man; for, "Lord, Thou knowest all things."²

But, as Man, He would not know all things, but would acquire knowledge by the progressive ratiocination of ordinary men. Thus, as God, "He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of men, for He knew what was in man;"³ but, as Man, He knew not the day nor the hour of His own coming to judgment.⁴

¹ Col. ii. 9.

² John xxi. 17.

³ John ii. 24, 25.

⁴ Mark xiii. 32.

As He assumed the entire nature of man, it became Him to fulfil the condition of complete humanity, and, therefore, to be informed by the same intellectual principle and process as other men are. Another evidence of our Lord possessing a human soul is supplied by the human affections and passions, and human will, which He exhibited. Now these, again, can only be ascribed to a subject proper for them, the only conceivable subjects being either His Divinity, or His Body, or His Soul. But to ascribe passions to His Divinity is impious; to refer them to His Body—insensible matter—is irrational; the only remaining subject is His Soul. Nor can it be objected, in consequence of the Apollinarian attempt to make an irrational human soul, that the affections exhibited by Christ might be ascribed to the sensitive or animal soul conceded to Him. For as this allowed animal soul is none other than what resides in brutes, it would be equivalent to saying, that brutes, which are not indeed incapable of all passions, are capable of the same passions as those observed in Christ, as His pity, love, sorrowfulness, and the like. So that we are again thrown back on the human soul, in its universally rational nature, as the only possible subject of the human passions experienced by our Lord Jesus Christ. And so with regard to His *Human Will*. Will, as it implies moral choice and

moral freedom, cannot be said to belong to the animal soul of brutes; the intellectual, human soul, therefore, was the seat of the Human Will in Christ. Further, our Lord's dying on the cross is an evidence of His possessing a human soul; for He said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my *Spirit*; and having said thus, He gave up the ghost."¹ Now, the animal soul of brutes does not survive its separation from the body ("the spirit of the beast goeth downward to the earth"²) but in the act of separation its being ceases.³ The spirit, then, commended to the Father, could not have been His mere sensitive soul. Again, the promise made to the penitent thief was, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."⁴ It could not be meant that the thief was to be with our Lord's body, for that was to be in the grave, which is not paradise. It must, therefore, be that the penitent thief was to be with the *soul* of Christ, itself, as well as the soul of the thief, surviving death. But we have seen that no other than the human rational soul does survive death. If, therefore, the thief was to be with Christ, that is, with Christ's soul in paradise, it must have been with the human, rational soul

¹ Luke xxiii. 46.

² Eccles. iii. 21.

³ Bishop Butler seemed to doubt that "animals ever lose their living powers." Analogy, c. i. p. 20, 29, 30.

⁴ Luke xxiii. 43.

possessed by Christ. Still further: our Lord's descent into hell proves that He assumed the soul of man; for this article of Christian belief must have respect either to our Lord's Divinity, or to His Body, or to His Soul.

But it cannot be said that Christ in respect of His Divinity descended into hell, as that Divinity is everywhere present, and at all times, and was consequently there before the present local passage thither.

Neither can the descent into hell be in reference to our Lord's Body, as that was in the grave. It must, therefore, be in respect of His Soul that our Lord descended into the receptacle of disembodied spirits; and as no other than a human soul would have been in being, or in a condition to inhabit a separate place; Christ, in descending into hell, gave another proof that, when He took man's nature, He took man's proper soul, and therein satisfied the universal law of death; proving that, in life and in death, He fulfilled the condition of humanity, becoming very Man in soul and in body. One other proof is furnished by His *Resurrection*; for, after that He rose from the dead, we find Him conversing and reasoning with the disciples: "He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law

of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures."¹ Such reasoning, and such a method of instruction, bespeak the rational soul, capable of argumentation. Moreover, if we regard the human soul as composed of three faculties or parts, viz., the vegetative, the sensitive, the rational, our Lord gave separate and independent evidence of each of these. Of the first, by eating: "Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And He took it, and *did eat* before them."² Of the second, by seeing and hearing the disciples; of the third, which constitutes a soul human, by the ratiocinative discourse just cited.

Finally, recalling the proper notion of a resurrection, viz., the reunion of the *same* soul and same body that had been separated by death, we see that, if Christ possessed a rational soul after His resurrection, He is proved to have possessed it before His death.

Of the eventual consequences of the Apollinarian heresy, some mention should be made. In the first place, it makes our redemption incomplete, by making our Redeemer incompletely Man; for if He only assumed man's body, He only became the Redeemer of man's body; man's soul, his intel-

¹ Luke xxiv. 44.

² Luke xxiv. 41-43.

lectual and immortal part, remains unredeemed, because one thing could not be redeemed by another different from it, but the body must be given for the body, the soul for the soul. But since our whole nature, body and soul, fell, our whole nature, soul and body, must be restored.

Our Redeemer, therefore, must be qualified to effect this restoration of our entire nature, by Himself assuming and offering the entire and complete nature of man. Secondly, it is to be observed that the Apollinarian heresy contains the germ of another, viz., the Eutychian; it may be considered incipient Eutychianism,¹ inasmuch as it detracts from the distinctness and completeness of one of the two natures in Christ, that is, from His distinct and complete humanity.

There is, in effect, a *confusion* of the human and Divine natures, when the Godhead is conceived to supply the place of one, and that the principal, constituent of the human nature.

Wherefore against Gnostics, who denied His flesh; and against Apollinarians, who denied His soul; we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world—"perfect Man, of a *reasonable soul* and human flesh subsisting."

¹ "Apollinaris did broach that heresy which was afterwards put in full form by Eutyches."—Burnet on Thirty-nine Articles, p. 439.

CHAPTER IV.

*The Nestorian Heresy:**Christ denied Unity of Person.*

3. IT has been already remarked that error in any one particular may lead to consequences not originally designed. The heresy concerning our Lord's Incarnation, which next in order of time contradicted the faith, and disturbed the peace, of the Church, is another instance of this. The Apollinarian error implied, as just said, a confusion of the two natures in our Lord, since it denied one element of humanity, and supplied its place by His Divinity. It became, therefore, an object to guard against such confusion of natures. But in the anxiety to defend the duality and distinctness of natures, certain Syrian Christians were betrayed into another error, asserting not only two distinct natures, but also two distinct agents or persons in Christ. So that one of the consequences of Apollinarianism was, that it occasioned the Nestorian heresy. This consisted of a misrepresentation of the *mode* in which the

Divine and human natures were united in our Lord; the Nestorian likening the mode in which the Godhead dwelt in Jesus to that in which the Holy Spirit dwelt in the Prophets, or the Divine Presence in the Temple. A vital and substantial union between Christ's Deity and Humanity being thus denied, and only a union of will and affections allowed, Nestorians went on to ascribe our Lord's actions, respectively, to two Persons or agents in Him; one, Divine, the Son of God; the other, Human, the Son of Man; thus giving to His Humanity, as well as to His Divinity, a personal subsistence of itself; the Manhood united to Deity in one visible form, but the Son of God, the subject of Divine perfections; the Son of Man, the subject of human infirmities.

But the union of natures in our Lord was *not* the passing indwelling of prophetic inspiration. It was the indwelling of the fulness of the Godhead bodily, by a vital, indissoluble union, whereby our Lord's *one* Person was the subject of *all* His attributes.

The term "hypostatic" union was used, as the best adapted to express the true way, in which the Divine and human natures were in our Lord, with a negative as well as positive purpose, so as to convey what the union was *not*; it was not a union transient and separable.

The rationale of the expression was this: The Word had already subsisted as a Person from all eternity, as one of the Persons of the Blessed Trinity. In the fulness of time, He was pleased for us men and for our salvation to come down from Heaven, and take into that same Person, not a particular and formed man, but the seed or nature of the human kind. For as Christ began to be Man, like others, at His conception, the human nature became united to His Person, before it possessed a personal subsistence.

If the Word had taken to Himself a nature personally subsistent, He *would* have been two Persons, viz., the Divine Person, which He was before the worlds, and the Human Person, which He became in the world.

Christ was God, not with a particular man, but "God with us,"¹ with the *nature* of mankind comprehending all particular persons. Our Lord's Personal Being experienced no addition, but only a change in its mode of subsistence. He who had before subsisted as a Person only in the Divine Nature now subsisted as one and the same Person in the human nature also.

Now this hypostatic union helps us to solve the phenomena, which flow from the union of natures.

Our Incarnate Lord is one Being; and it follows

¹ Matt. i. 23.

that all His attributes, whether glorious or lowly ; and all His actions, whether miraculous or natural, must be ascribed to one subject ; so that, reciprocally, we may say that the Son of Man raised the dead, and the Son of God Himself died.

Christ being but one agent, compounded of two natures, that self-same agent may be made the subject of the names and properties of either nature indifferently ; human infirmities may be attributed to God ; Divine perfections, to man. God, for Jesus was God, suffered hunger in a wilderness ; Man, for Jesus was Man, satisfied miraculously the hunger of others in a wilderness. The hypostatic union justifies the communion of properties.

Next we proceed to the fact, that in Holy Scripture whatever is predicated of Jesus Christ is predicated of one Person, and must, therefore, have been done by one Person.

A first instance of this unity of the subject, and consequent interchange of the respective properties of the two natures, is the angel's message to Mary, "that holy thing which shall be *born* of thee shall be called the *Son of God*."¹ It was not the human Jesus who was born of the Virgin, but the Son of God. Again, Christ, who was the *Son* of David, is also called his *Lord* : "if David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son ?"²—even by the same Person

¹ Luke i. 35.

² Matt. xxii. 45.

being both God, of the substance of the Father, and Man, of the substance of His mother. And He who was of the *seed* of Abraham was the same who had existed *before* Abraham: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast *Thou* seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."¹ In the opening of the first chapter of S. John's Gospel, it is one and the same Person, whose Divinity, Humanity, and Office are there set forth. The Word who "was made flesh, and dwelt among us,"² is the same who "in the beginning was with God, and was God, and by Whom all things were made."³ And S. Paul says of the same Being, that He "in whom we have redemption through His Blood,"⁴ is He by whom "were *all things created*." Again, the same Being, even the Son of Man, who spoke with Nicodemus on earth, was at that moment in heaven.⁵ And it was one and the self-same Christ who was "in the form of God," and who "made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the

¹ John viii. 56-58.² John i. 14.³ John i. 1, 3.⁴ Col. i. 14, 16.⁵ John iii. 13.

death of the cross."¹ Nor was it, in Nestorian language, the Human Jesus, and not the Eternal Word, who rose from the dead, as is evident from Hebrews 1, where the Apostle, speaking of the will of God being in these last days made known unto us by His *Son*, and asserting His infinite superiority to angels, confirms that assertion by the fact that the *Son*, by *His Resurrection*, was the First-Begotten into the world: "Thou art my *Son*; this day have I begotten *Thee*."² S. Paul, also, affirms of our "great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the *Son of God*,"³ that He "can have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way, for that *He Himself* also (the same Son of God and High Priest) is *compassed with infirmity*."⁴

Lastly, how can it be maintained that the Human Jesus, and not the Divine Word, poured out His Life, when the overseers of the flock are bidden to feed that "Church of *God*,"⁵ which *He* hath purchased with *His own Blood*;" and how shall any affirm two Persons in Christ; one human, the subject of human infirmities; the other, Divine, the subject of Divine perfections; when it was a mark of "the hidden wisdom" of God being un-

¹ Phil. ii. 6-8.

² Heb. i. 5.

³ Heb. iv. 14.

⁴ Heb. v. 2.

⁵ Acts xx. 28. If the reading "*Κυρίου*" be preferred, the argument is not affected.

known to "the princes of this world," that they crucified, not the human Jesus, but "the *Lord of Glory*?"¹ From our Lord's appearance in this world to His departure from it, His every action and suffering was the action and suffering of the Son of God. It was the Son of God who was conceived, who was born, who hungered, who suffered, who died, who was buried, who descended into hell, who rose again from the dead, who ascended into heaven.

Our next step is to add a requisite qualification to the doctrine, which attributes the properties and actions of two such opposite natures as the Divine and Human to the same subject. In the consideration of all the phenomena of our Lord's Incarnation, the principle of abstraction must be applied. Our Lord in His one Person possessed two natures; but though whatever He did or suffered, He did or suffered in one subject, yet it was by virtue, or in respect of one or other of His two natures. So that whilst it would be impossible to affirm such contrary characteristics as omnipotence and infirmity of the same *nature*, these may be affirmed of the one Person, compounded of two natures, possessing respectively these characteristics.

We say of *man* in his compound state, that he is mortal and immortal: mortal, in respect of his body; immortal, in regard to his soul.

Similarly, when a Divine attribute is affirmed of Christ, as His knowing what was in man, and also a human infirmity, as hunger, these are affirmed of Him, respectively, in relation to the nature capable of one or the other.

Christ knew what was in man, as God ; the same Christ hungered, as Man. Let us apply this to the Nestorian difficulty concerning the Blessed Virgin. The mother of our Lord was denied the title of θεοτόκος, or Deipara, under the idea that the Divine nature cannot be produced, and that, therefore, her proper title would be Χριστοτόκος, or the mother of the human Christ, the Son of Man. It is manifest that the Son of God, *quā* such (in His Divinity), could not be born ; the Son of God, as such, was begotten from everlasting of the Father ; but, as it is one of the canons of true opposition that it be "*secundum idem*," the human origin, which cannot be affirmed of Christ, *secundum idem*, viz., His Divinity, may be affirmed of Him in relation to His humanity.

Accordingly, the title θεοτόκος vindicates a fact, and involves no inconsistency. Our Lord possessed two natures. Mary was the mother of our Lord in one of them, the human nature ; but, because that Manhood was the Manhood of Him who was God, and Christ being but one Person, it might with truth be said, that Mary was the mother of God,

as she was the mother, in His human nature, of Him, who *was* God. The same principle of interpretation must be applied to the whole of our Blessed Lord's life. It was, indeed, the same Person in every action and suffering, but at one time exercising the perfections of His Divine nature; at another, exhibiting the infirmities of His human nature. He worked signs and wonders *quod* He was God; He underwent privations and sufferings *quod* He was Man: yet under each class of circumstances, in an identity of Person, Man wrought signs, God underwent sufferings; but Man, in respect of the Divine Nature, which Christ possessed; God, in respect of the human nature, which He assumed. Here, then, is no contradiction, no confusion of Divine and human characteristics; for neither are the attributes of Deity alienated, or transferred to humanity, nor the attributes of humanity transferred to Deity; but, both being possessed at once by one Person, He may, according to His purposes, exert or suspend either.

It has thus been shown that Christ is one Person compounded of two natures, and that His recorded actions and sufferings were performed and undergone, by virtue or in respect of one or other of the natures, of which His Person was so compounded. These two truths may be illustrated by human analogies.

First, in illustration of the subsistence of two natures in one person, we are referred in the Athanasian Creed to the analogous composition of *man*; for "as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and Man is one Christ."

Here is an experienced fact analogous to a revealed fact. The difficulty in the latter is the conjunction of two such opposite natures as the Infinite and the finite; but in the former (the experienced fact) a difficulty similar in kind, though not in degree, is found; for our own composition is the result of two opposite elements, the material and the immaterial, so conjoined in each man as to make one person.

Nor is the philosophy of the union of body and soul in ourselves, an experienced fact, better understood than that of the union of Deity and humanity in Christ, a revealed fact.

Our imperfect knowledge of the nature of things, of the possible and the impossible, and the analogous difficulties in human experience and Divine Revelation, should deter us from disputing the possibility of the recorded phenomena of our Lord's Incarnation.

The second truth to be illustrated is the fact, that of one compound person that thing may be affirmed, which strictly belongs to one of the constituent elements. Man is compounded of body and soul; and each of these elements has its own

inalienable characteristics ; the body, being insensible matter, is incapable of intellectual and moral exertion ; the soul, being an immaterial principle, is incapable of material actions.

Yet of man, the compound being, is predicated indifferently that which strictly belongs to one, whichever it be, of his elements. Man is said to eat, and man is said to will ; *i.e.*, he performs the one and the other, by virtue of the principle to which it is incident : he eats, in respect of, or by the ministry of the body ; he wills, by virtue of the soul. Still in each, man is one and the only agent ; and just as, according to our different apprehensions of the material and the immaterial, we refer our actions, respectively, to the one or the other element of our compound being, or to the two conjointly, where both concur in producing an effect ; so our apprehensions of the Divine and human may enable us to assign the actions and sufferings of our Lord's compound Person, either to His Divine, or to His human nature, or to both conjointly, where there is a concurrence of both. His supernatural actions, as His walking on the sea, His stilling the tempest ; His raising the dead, will be attributed to His Divinity,¹ though often His body, as an instrument, concurred.

¹ It may be that some of our Lord's miracles, *e.g.*, the first and the second draught of fishes, the stater in the fish's mouth, the

Christ, in the power of His Godhead, wrought these and other miracles.

On the other hand, His natural or human actions and sufferings, as His eating and drinking, His experiencing fatigue, sorrow, and death, will be ascribed to His humanity. Christ, in the weakness of His Manhood, exhibited these and other human infirmities.

The importance of the right faith on this feature of the Incarnation must be noticed. First, it gives an increased dignity to the records of our Lord's history; for when we feel that the subject of it throughout is no other than the Only-Begotten Son,

stilling of the tempest, the walking on the sea, were performed in virtue of His sovereignty as Perfect Man, the rightful Lord of the world by Divine charter. "Thou makest Him to have dominion of the works of Thy hands; and Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet . . . the fishes of the sea; and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the seas." Ps. viii. 6, 8.

A startling suggestion was once put forward in an article on Animal Magnetism, *Christian Remembrancer*, April, 1847, p. 388; that possibly some of our Lord's cures were effected by that magnetic or sanative power, which, as some believe, resides in the human body. "May we not say that if it be indeed true that God has implanted in the body and will of man any sanative power for the good of his brethren, call it by what name you will, He who condescended to become our Brother, who was made in all points like unto us, who took all things belonging to the perfection of man's nature, would take to Himself that faculty in all its perfection, as well as others? So should we naturally expect to find Him performing His Divine works of mercy through, and by means of, the sanative power of the perfect human body and will, if it be true that such a sanative power exists."

a sacredness and pregnancy of meaning are imparted to Christ's every word and act, each word and each act being the word and act of *God*.

Secondly, the importance of vindicating the unity of Christ's Person appears from its connection with the scheme of redemption. The Nestorian hypothesis, making Christ to consist of the Son of God, and the Son of Man, as two Persons, affirms His death to have occurred in the Person only of the latter. A Man only, then, has been our atonement; but a human atonement only is of insufficient value and uncertain efficacy, for only a created being, a creature himself needing a Redeemer, has been offered up in our stead.

But how shall the vicarious sacrifice of one mere creature satisfy Divine justice for the guilt of all other creatures? Our scapegoat, in order to possess sufficient value, and be a proportionate substitute, for fallen man, must himself be more than man; he must be God; thus imparting infinite value and undoubted efficacy to the substitution of himself in the stead of the whole human race. Secondly, though an effectual Redeemer could be no other Person than God; yet, because God is a Being impassible, our Redeemer put Himself in a condition to shed blood for the remission of our sins. He took into His Person the human nature, and in the nature which had sinned in the same He paid its

debt.¹ And thus the Divine Son fulfilled all the requisites of an effectual sacrifice; His Manhood making Him capable of dying; His Godhead making that death of precious value and certain efficacy.

But if His Godhead had formed one Person, and His Manhood another, our Redeemer had not been in a capacity to shed blood of infinite value. His Divine Person would, indeed, have been infinitely valuable, and His human would have been capable of suffering; but the *same* Redeemer would not *have suffered, and have satisfied*.

To suppose two Persons in Christ is to divide the sufferings from the satisfaction, the sufferer from the satisfier; and thus to impugn the efficacy of Christ's satisfaction, for he who cannot suffer cannot satisfy.

So that in order to our certain redemption, sufferings and satisfaction must be united in the self-same Redeemer. Wherefore, as distinguished from the Nestorian heresy, the right faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ—God and Man—"is not two, but one Christ."²

¹ "So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man."

Milton, "Paradise Lost," iii. 294, 295.

Yet Milton probably did not adequately conceive of the *inclusive* humanity of our Lord as being *Man*, i.e., all of us before God.

² Athanasian Creed.

CHAPTER V.

The Eutychian Heresy:*Christ denied Two Distinct Natures.*

4. THE Eutychian heresy was the particular corruption of the right faith concerning our Lord's Incarnation, which next arose; and it seems to have been occasioned through a perversion of the arguments urged in opposing the errors of Nestorians.

No sooner had the unity of our Lord's Person been vindicated than the duality of His natures was contradicted. Thus the particular truth, which had been acknowledged by the last, was denied by the present heresy. Nestorius allowed the diversity of natures, whilst disallowing the identity of Person; Eutyches allowed the identity of Person, but disallowed the diversity of natures. It was affirmed that in Christ Incarnate there was but one nature. Three different hypotheses were put forward in support of this assertion: first, it was argued that in our Incarnate Lord there was but one nature, because the human nature was converted into the

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Divine ; or, secondly, because the Divine nature was converted into the human ; or, thirdly, because the Divine and human natures were commingled, the result being one nature, compounded of Divine and human elements.

These several hypotheses shall be considered. As to the first—that the oneness of nature resulted from a conversion of the human nature into the Divine.

The question which at once arises is, At what time did this conversion of natures occur ? The Eutychian figment proposed one of three periods : it occurred either at Christ's Conception, or at His Resurrection, or at His Ascension. But this conversion of the human nature into the Divine could not have taken place at Christ's conception, for His humanity only *began* at His Conception. To say that the flesh was made the Word at that time, as in effect the Eutychian did say, involves a contradiction, for it amounts to saying that Christ's humanity was *made*, by being converted into His Divinity.

But to change the condition of any object, as here to annihilate it, necessarily implies the previous existence of that object ; a non-entity cannot become an entity, by its conversion or absorption into another substance ; the flesh cannot be converted until after it is made.

Secondly, the flesh was not made the Word; the human nature was not transubstantiated into the Divine at the time of our Lord's *Resurrection*; because, after He rose, He demonstrated the distinctness and reality of His humanity, by showing Himself possessed of *bodily* members and organs, as well as of the vegetative, sensitive, and rational faculties of the human *soul*.

Nor, thirdly, is there any evidence that our Lord's humanity was annihilated, or absorbed into His Deity, by His Ascension. The act of Ascension was a local translation of Christ from earth to heaven "with *all things* appertaining to the perfection of *man's nature*."¹ So that His humanity must be conceded down to the time that He was parted from us and carried up into heaven. The only conceivable time of its annihilation is *after* His Ascension; but Revelation is silent as to any such subsequent change.

There is, on the contrary, presumption and proof of His being now in heaven such as He was, when He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of the disciples' sight; for at the Lord's Second Advent, at the end of the world (it must here be repeated), "This same Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."² His humanity, there-

¹ Article iv.

² Acts i. 11.

fore, is still preserved, and is to continue till His return as the ordained Judge of quick and dead. Nay, our Lord's humanity is to continue after Time is no more, throughout Eternity; for its perpetuity is implied in the everlasting ascription of "blessing and honour and glory and power . . . unto the *Lamb* for ever and ever."¹ Our nature, as Hooker says, has been deified, though not by turning it, into Himself, yet by making it God's own inseparable habitation; or, in authoritative language, "two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, *never to be divided*" (*inseparabiliter conjunctæ*).

Further, if there were but one nature left in our Incarnate Lord, and that the Divine, then must the Divine nature have suffered, which is impossible.

Again, since the Divine *Nature* belongs equally to the First and Third Persons of the Blessed Trinity, though united to the human in the Second Person only, the sufferings undergone in the Divine nature, supposing it capable of suffering, would have been undergone by the Father and the Holy Spirit; but to represent the Father so suffering is to relapse into the error of Patripassians.

So that a distinct human nature in Christ must be acknowledged, as the only nature capable of suffering.

¹ Rev. v. 13.

The second hypothesis for the oneness of nature was a supposed conversion of the Divine nature into the human, as if the Word being made flesh implied, that the Word, by assuming a new nature, divested Himself of His original nature; as if, in becoming what before He was not, viz, Man, He ceased to be what before He was, viz., God. But this contradicts the first conceptions of Deity. The Nature of God, being eternally subsistent, immutable, and indivisible, can neither be made, nor changed, nor divided. But all these *are* incident to the nature of man; it is made, it admits of change (as to be spiritualized, and glorified); and it is a compound, divided into an immortal soul and mortal body.

Further, to suppose the Divine nature transubstantiated into the human is again to fall into Patripassian error; for if the Divine *Nature* (common to the Father and to the Holy Ghost) had been turned into flesh, then would the Father (as also the Holy Ghost) have suffered.

We might even say that there would be no Deity left at all, if the one indivisible nature of God had been changed into humanity.

It would, also, follow that our Blessed Lord, His Divine nature being evacuated and another nature taken in its place, comes to be regarded only as a Man; and thus His sufferings and atone-

ment are no longer, since He had ceased to be God, the meritorious and all-sufficient oblation of God. It is not to be believed that our Lord's Divinity has either merged, or changed, or impaired its own nature and majesty, by uniting itself to humanity. The only change is, not of nature, but in its mode of subsistence; the Divine nature, which before subsisted by itself, now, in the Second Person of the Godhead, subsists in union with another nature, the human; the addition of a nature not implying the destruction of the prior nature, to which such addition is made.

If the original nature did not continue to exist, the change would be a substitution, not an addition.

The third supposition remains. The two former notions supposed a single conversion; either (as the first) of the human nature into the Divine; or (as the second) of the Divine nature into the human. The present notion supposes a double or mutual conversion, in part, of each nature into the other; the Divine partly converted into the human, the human partly into the Divine. So that there results but one, and that, not as before simply a Divine, or simply a human nature, but a compound nature, neither wholly Divine nor wholly human. Against this is the fact, first, that the Divine nature, being indivisible, cannot be communicated in part. The Son is consubstantial with the Father,

because the Father communicated His entire and undivided nature to the Son. Again, as not the Divine nature, so neither are the Divine *attributes* communicable in part; Christ could not, therefore, be partly Divine. Nor can it be said that He was partly human, for His Incarnate life showed infirmities wholly human. Moreover, this supposed, but impossible commixture of natures, producing only a being of dubious nature, neither God nor Man, affects the doctrine of the atonement; for, unless our Redeemer be perfect and very Man in body and soul, He could not have truly suffered some things in His body, some in His soul.

On the other hand, unless He be perfect and very God, His satisfaction is imperfect, and insufficient.

So that two entire natures must be conceded, in order to the perfection of our redemption. Our sacrifice must be wholly God, and wholly Man; not a nondescript being, of an anomalous and negative nature. Our Incarnate Lord's Person, we are compelled to hold, consisted of two whole, perfect, and unblended natures, the Divine and the human; each retaining to itself its own capacities and characteristics. Such properties as belong to Deity disunited from humanity, such still belong to the distinct and perfect Godhead of Christ; and such as belong to humanity disunited from Deity,

still belong to the distinct and perfect Manhood of Christ. If our Lord had only possessed one *mixed* nature, we should be unable to refer any one action of His life to its proper cause.

That life exhibited Divine and human effects ; the one to be ascribed to the Divine nature, the other to the human ; but, on the supposition of a mixed or amalgamated nature, neither wholly human nor wholly Divine, how shall we refer effects wholly human to causes partially human ; or effects wholly Divine to causes partially Divine ?

There must be adequate causes for both ; but these are only found in the verity that our Lord, in an identity of Person, possessed two unmutilated natures, Divine and human ; the causes, respectively, of His diverse actions, Divine and human.

Wherefore, as distinguished from the Eutychian heresy, the right faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God and Man, is not two, but one Christ ; "One ; not by *conversion of the Godhead into flesh* (nor by *conversion of the flesh into the Godhead*), but by taking the Manhood into God ; one altogether, not by *confusion of substance*, but by unity of Person."¹

¹ Athanasian Creed

CHAPTER VI.

The Monothelite Heresy :*Christ denied Two Distinct Wills.*

5. THE last heresy which it was proposed to consider is Monothelitism. But, as before said, this error is not so much a distinct heresy, as the revival of Eutychianism in another form. In the seventh century, the perverse idea was agitated that in Christ Incarnate there resided but *one will*, viz., His Divine will.

To disprove this, it is only necessary to re-assert the diversity of natures in Christ ; for one only will implies one only nature. But if there be two whole and perfect natures in Him, there must be two wills. A perfect nature is such as is possessed of all its intrinsic and essential properties. To deny any one of its properties is to deny its perfection ; deficient in one property, it thereby becomes *imperfect*. But we have confessed that in Christ Incarnate there do reside two *perfect* natures ; and, confessing this, we cannot deny one of its properties,

or, denying one, we contradict our former confession. Now, in a rational creature, there is nothing more inherent than its faculty of volition. Accordingly, to the human nature there belongs a human will. Our Lord, possessing a perfect human nature, possessed, as one of its properties (without which He would not be very Man), an independent human will, or self-moving faculty of volition, together with His Divine will, the property of His Divine nature.

And this truth is confirmed by our Lord's own words: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work."¹ This implies that Christ had in His human nature a desire to fulfil the Divine will. How could the distinction of wills—the one human, the other Divine—be more clearly stated than in the words, "I seek not my *own* but the will of the *Father* which hath sent me?"² Or, again, the assurance, "I came down from heaven not to do *mine own* will, but the *will of Him* that sent me."³ Surely the human will, as distinct from the Divine, is manifested in His agony: "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not *my* will, but *Thine*, be done."⁴

The allowed fact, then, of two perfect natures in

¹ John iv. 34.

² John vi. 38.

³ John v. 30.

⁴ Luke xxii. 42.

Christ compels us to allow to each nature its own properties, and, amongst the properties, a separate will in each nature is included: Jesus Christ, as God, possessing a Divine; as Man, a human will.

It yet remains to take notice of the *character* of Christ's human will.

Unlike the will of ordinary men, Christ's was in perfect harmony with the will of God. The opposition between the human and Divine wills in "every man that *naturally* is engendered of the offspring of Adam"¹ arises from our original sinfulness, from fault and corruption of nature.

But the human will of Christ was not "inclined to evil," that is, was free from all inclination to oppose the Divine Will, through His supernatural conception, whereby His humanity was untainted with original corruption. For He who was to redeem others from sin must Himself be free from sin; but as every man that *naturally* is engendered is born with an impaired nature, our Redeemer was supernaturally engendered, the Holy Spirit overshadowing a pure Virgin, and enabling her to conceive out of the ordinary course of nature.,

Christ was thus free from the original corruption, which gives a sinful bias to the will of men, born in the way of nature.

There being thus no sinful tendencies in Christ's

¹ Article ix.

human will, it was ever in perfect conformity with the Divine Will, though distinct from it.

True it is, that Christ, as Man, *deprecated* the sufferings which were appointed by the Will of God (for "God before had shewed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer"¹), but this not absolutely, or as in any sense opposing the Will of His Father.

The Will of Jesus, like in the following respect to the will of ordinary men (which is unlike the undistracted Will of God), had contrary inclinations. The human will does in different respects desire and dread the same thing. It may desire something, as being an ultimate good, and, at the same time, in another respect it may dread the very same thing, as being a present evil.²

Hence the distraction of Christ's human will in His agony. In one respect, it desired suffering and death, as being His own voluntary offering, in order to redeem a fallen world, as He said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but *I lay it down of myself*."³ Yet

¹ Acts iii. 18.

² "Sickness is *in some sense* eligible, because it is the opportunity and the proper scene of exercising some virtues."—Jeremy Taylor, "Holy Dying," p. 85. Ed. Pickering, London, 1840.

Cf. Aristotle Nic. Eth. iii. p. 35, on *μικτά πρότερον*, as being in different respects both voluntary and involuntary.

³ John x. 17, 18.

because sufferings and death are present evils, and, as such, shunned by human nature, Christ, as Man, at the very same time, though in a different respect, deprecated them, when He said, "Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour."¹ The distraction of the human will, then, being an experienced fact, accounts for Christ's prayer, and shews that there was no real variance between the human and Divine Wills. And thus free from original corruption of nature and depravity of will, He who was born of Mary was, in a fulness of meaning, a "holy thing;"² the prince of this world came, and "had nothing in Him;"³ He "knew no sin;"⁴ yea, "This Man hath done nothing amiss."⁵

Thus much has been said on the sinlessness of Christ's human nature, and the consequent agreement of His human will with the Will of God, lest the fact of His being very Man should lead us to doubt the possibility of His Will being absolutely upright.

We may neither deny His sinlessness, because He was Man, nor His true Manhood, because He was sinless. It should also be borne in mind, that sin is the corruption, not the original constitution of human nature, man having been at the first created upright;⁶ so that He who should come

¹ John xii. 7.² Luke i. 35.³ John xiv. 30.⁴ 2 Cor. v. 21.⁵ Luke xxiii. 41.⁶ Eccles. vii. 29.

into the world in the first man's original purity would be more truly Man, as more like the prototype of the species, than they who partake of human nature only in its fallen and corrupted state.

It has thus been endeavoured to give some account of the principal heresies relating to our Lord's Incarnation.

Briefly to recapitulate the right faith in opposition to its several perversions:—

1. We believe and confess, that our Incarnate Lord was very Man, possessed of a real human body, derived from the substance of His mother, born in the world, as against the Gnostic heresy, which denied the reality of His human flesh.
2. We believe and confess, that our Lord possessed a reasonable soul, against the Apollinarians, who asserted it to be superseded and supplied by His Divinity.
3. We believe and confess, that Christ Incarnate was only one Person, compounded of two natures, against the Nestorian heresy, which gave to each nature a personal subsistence.
4. We believe and confess, that Christ possessed two perfect, unchanged, unmixed natures; each nature retaining its own essential properties, against Eutychianism, which imagined a confusion of substances.
5. We believe and confess, that, as the Incarnate

Christ possessed two distinct natures, He, therefore, possessed two distinct wills, against those Monothelites, who allowed one only will.

And believing and confessing these truths, we believe and confess, in its integrity, the Catholic doctrine of our Lord's Incarnation: that He is perfect God and perfect Man, and that God and Man is one Christ.

CHAPTER VII.

*Providential Uses of Heresies—Clear Reasons for Believing
Obscure Truths—Mystery to end with Probation.*

AND now does this dreary catalogue of heresies, these repeated efforts of the evil one to subvert the Christian faith, dispirit the Christian student? "Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me?"¹

Let faith, justified by experience, dispel gloomy fears for the continuance of the Catholic faith. Error has its uses under God, as it is written, "There must be also heresies among you, that they *which are approved may be made manifest* among you."² Out of the immediate dangers and evils of heresy, good is providentially evolved; the right faith is fully elicited, and formally set forth, for the guidance of successive generations of believers.

Truth is thus more firmly established; error more strongly exposed; even as the true prophets and God's commissioned servants of old received in-

¹ Ps. lxii. 6.

² 1 Cor. xi. 19.

creased honour, from being confronted with false prophets, and pretenders. The Christian creed has been sifted as wheat, but the faith of the Church has not failed; whereas, if exempted from heretical assaults, the right faith might have been less manifest, and less appreciated.

As "the fining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold,"¹ so the precious verities of Christianity have been tried as by fire, and now shine the brighter for the fierce ordeal; and, surviving through eighteen centuries, they abide, in their integrity, to the present hour. Such is the providential use of heresy.

One or two further thoughts are suggested by an inquiry into the corruptions of the true doctrine of our Lord's Incarnation.

We are admonished of the necessity of an entire, unreserved submission to the statements of the written Word, and of the fatal connection, which one heresy has with another, seeing that unsoundness of faith in any one particular may affect and subvert the whole body of Christian doctrine.²

We are further reminded of the danger of allowing our preconceptions to impede our reception of revealed verities.

¹ Prov. xvii. 3.

² "What (other) heresy is there, which doth not raze the very foundation of faith by consequent."—Hooker, *Serm. ii. 32. Works*, vol. ii. p. 641.

The Gnostic denial of the reality of our Lord's human flesh arose out of the preconception that all matter was intrinsically evil, and, therefore, *unlikely* to be taken into the pure essence of Deity. In like manner, the Apollinarian, Nestorian, and Eutychian heresies arose out of the attempt to solve the mysterious phenomena of the Incarnation, according to some preconceived human supposition.

In our reception of a *Revelation*, wherein difficulties would be antecedently expected, neither our prejudices nor our experience can reasonably or safely be made our standard of judging, explaining, or believing. If we believe the volume of Scripture to be God's Word,¹ it is an act of reason to accept its statements in the simple acquiescence of faith. Revelation itself admits that "great is the mystery of godliness,"² in that greatest instance, "God manifest in the flesh." The mystery, which cleaves to a personal union of two such infinitely distant natures as those of God and man, must remain in this life impenetrable.

That the invisible God, who is a Spirit, should assume a human body; and He whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting, should be born in the world an Infant Child; that He who

¹ "It was a property of heresy to damage the authority of Scripture."—Blunt's "Church in first three Centuries," p. 156.

² 1 Tim. iii. 16.

is Omniscient should be informed by the slow developments of a reasonable soul; that He who from all eternity subsisted as a Divine Person in the sole glory of Heaven should descend to earth; and, taking into that Person our nature, submit to infirmity and sorrow, ignominy and death; that in that same Person two such distinct natures should be so intimately conjoined, yet never confused; that He, whose Divine will called this and perhaps other worlds into being, should also assume and exercise a separate human will; these are the greatest of recorded miracles, beyond the greatest advances of finite beings to understand.¹

But God designs a moral use of the understanding. There is the assent of belief, as well as the assent of knowledge. The things are Divine; the understandings, human.

We cannot fully understand *what* we believe; we do fully understand *why* we believe. We have clear reasons for believing obscure truths.

God has spoken, and on that authority Reason bids Faith to repose. He has told us that a woman became the mother, in respect of His humanity, of Him who was her Creator; and that He suffered death, who only hath life and immortality. Our soul now rests on the sympathy of a Saviour, who

¹ Archbishop Trench calls the Incarnation "the highest and most glorious of *Parables*."—Notes on the Parables, p. 15.

is Man; on the support of a Saviour, who is God.

We know, then, what we mean to believe, though we allow the language of theology to be the language of children.¹ As the child longs to become a man, to advance to a fulness of understanding, and put away childish things, so the believer longs for the day, when his light shall have no mixture of darkness.

Mystery shall end with probation; "when that which is perfect shall come, then that which is in part shall be done away."² In the twilight of this life, the believer's full sight of Divine realities is intercepted.

Though a *bright* cloud, still it is cloud that now, as on the Mount of Transfiguration, overshadows the disciples.³ They wait, believing and adoring, for "the perfect day,"⁴ the unclouded brightness of the life to come, when in God's light they shall see light.⁵

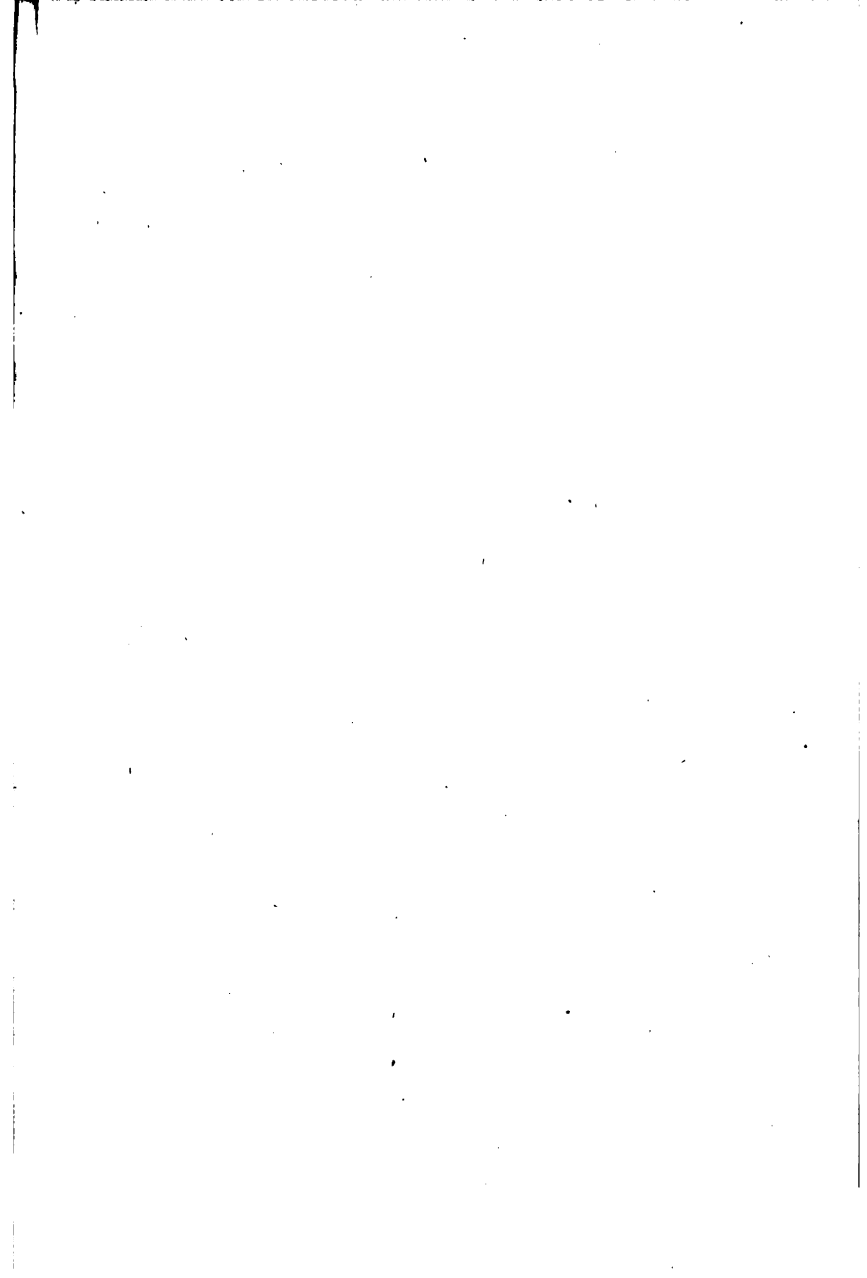
¹ 1 Cor. xiii. 11. "I *spake* as a child."

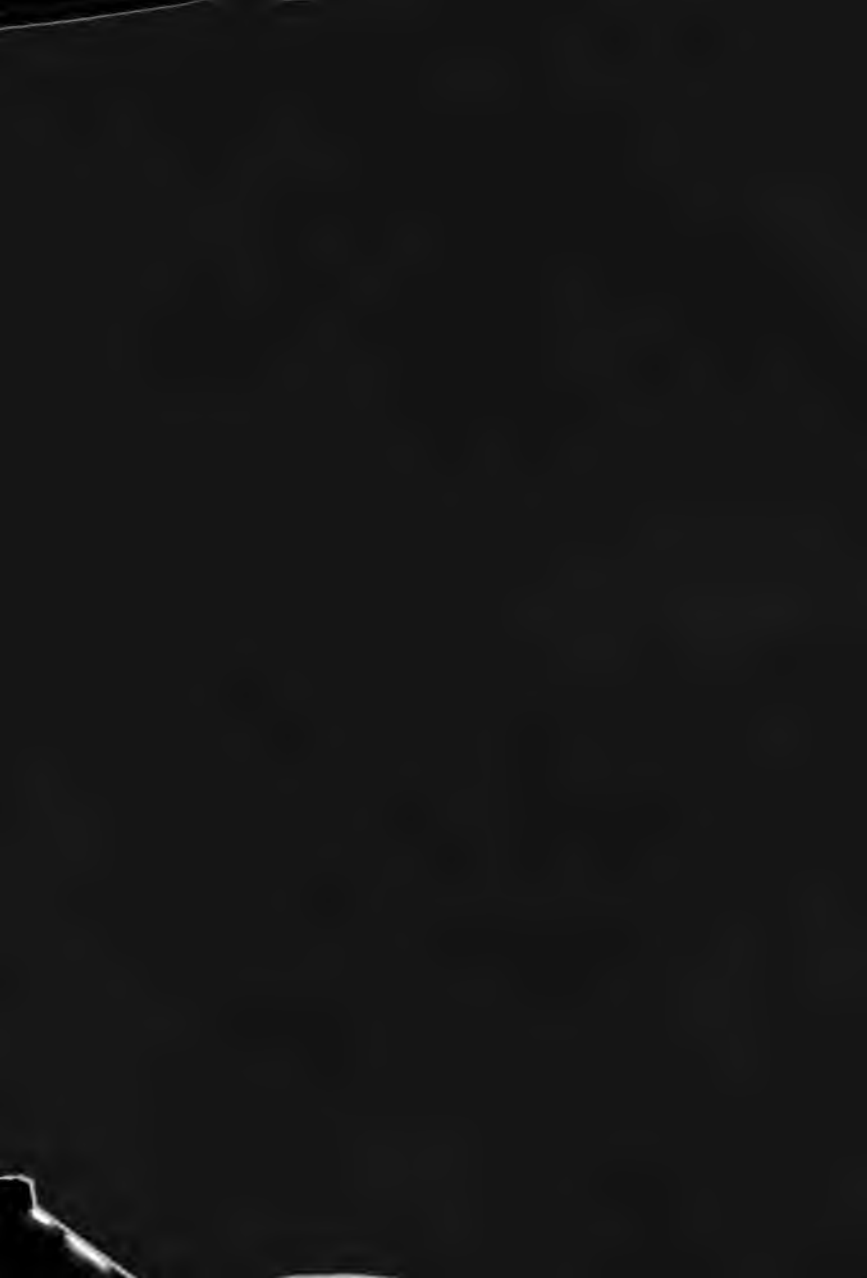
² 1 Cor. xiii. 10.

³ Matt. xvii. 5.

⁴ Prov. iv. 18.

⁵ Ps. xxxvi. 9.





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